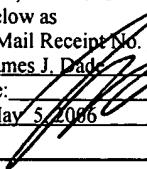




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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as Express Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.10 on the date shown below as
Express Mail Receipt No. EV 478559819 US
Name: James J. Dado
Signature: 
Date: May 5, 2006

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : Koichiro Hirao
Serial No. : 10/619,679
Filed : July 14, 2003
Title : IMAGE ENCODING APPARATUS, IMAGE . . .

May 5, 2006

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

SIR:

In order to comply with discretionary regulations 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98, attached hereto is a copy of Form PTO-1449 and copies of the non-US documents (if any) listed thereon. These documents contain information which the Examiner may consider to be important in deciding whether to issue a patent in the instant application.

For documents written in a language other than English, English language abstracts and/or explanations are annexed thereto explaining the relevancy in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3).

Also attached is a Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006, from the corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217. All of the documents listed in Form PTO-1449 appear in the Japanese Office Action.

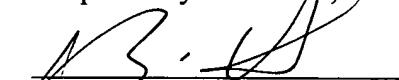
The present Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted in compliance with 37 CFR 1.56 as an Examiner might consider any cited document important in deciding whether to allow the application to issue as a patent, but the citation of each document is not to be construed as an admission that such document is necessarily relevant or prior art. No representation is intended that the cited documents represent the results of a complete search, and it is anticipated that the Examiner in the normal course of examination, will make an independent search and will determine the best prior art consistent with 37 CFR 1.104 (a), and in the course of such search will review for relevance every document cited on the attached form even if not initialed.

As this statement is being filed prior to issuance of a first Office Action, no fee is due.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian E. Hennessey
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1449/PTO

U.S. Department of Commerce
Patent and Trademark Office

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
STATEMENT BY APPLICANT**

Application No. : 10/619,679

Filing Date : 07/14/2003

First Named Inventor: Koichiro Hirao

Group Art Unit : 2621

Examiner Name

Attorney Docket No. : NECL 20.514

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

FOREIGN DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials	Cite No. ¹	Foreign Patent Document Office ³ Number ⁴ Kind Code ⁵ (if known)	Country	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Date of Publication of Cited Document MM-DD-YY/Y	Pages, Columns Lines Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		05-328136	JP	OKI ELECTRIC IND CO LTD	12-10-1993	*, **
		11-055531	JP	RICOH CO LTD	02-26-1999	*, **

*Mentioned in Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006 for corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217

** English language abstracts provided

Other Prior Art-Non Patent Literature Documents

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), data, page(s), volume-issue number(s), publisher, country, where published, source.	Applicant check here if English language translation attached
		Japanese Office Action dated March 7, 2006 for corresponding Japanese Application 2002-206217	X (partial)
Examiner Signature		Date Considered	

Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw a line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.
*Unique citation designation number. *See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. * Enter Office that issued the document by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). * For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. * Kind of document by symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.1* if possible. * Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached. Burden Hour Statement. This form is estimated to take 2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of Information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. DO NOT SES- FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.